

John Boehner
Chairman
8th District, Ohio

House Meets at 10:00 a.m. for Legislative Business

Anticipated Floor Action:

H.R. 1853—Carl D. Perkins Vocational-Technical Education Act Amendments
H.R. 2160—FY 1998 Agriculture Appropriations Act



H.R. 1853—Carl D. Perkins Vocational-Technical Education Act Amendments

Floor Situation: The House will consider H.R. 1853 as its first order of business today. Yesterday, the Rules Committee granted an open rule providing one hour of general debate, equally divided between the chairman and ranking minority member of the Education and Workforce Committee. It makes in order a committee amendment in the nature of a substitute as base text and grants priority in recognition to members who have their amendments pre-printed in the *Congressional Record*. The rule waives House rules which require that committee reports be available three days before consideration. Finally, the rule provides for one motion to recommit, with or without instructions.

Summary: H.R. 1853 authorizes \$1.3 billion for FY 1998 and such sums as necessary for FY 1999-2002 for programs to improve state vocational-technical education programs. As reported by the committee, the bill also (1) bases the amount of funding that each state receives on the population age 15 to 19 and age 20 to 24; (2) requires that 90 percent of each state allocation go to local districts for general vocational education; (3) allows states to set aside up to 10 percent of their allocation for rural areas; (4) eliminates set asides for single parents, displaced homemakers, single pregnant women, sex equity programs, gender equity programs, and criminal offenders; (5) removes the requirement that state plans be reviewed by special program administrators; (6) requires states to develop quantifiable benchmarks to measure the success of vocational education programs; (7) repeals the original vocational education program, the Smith-Hughes Act; and (8) authorizes funds from private entities that lease property for federal telecommunication services to be used to support “tech-prep” programs, which combine two years of secondary education with two years of technical skill development that focuses on applied academics and leads to an associate degree or technical skill certificate. CBO estimates that enactment will result in discretionary outlays of \$6.5 billion over the next five years, assuming that the maximum amount of appropriations are made available.

The bill will reduce direct spending by \$1 million in FY 1998 and by \$30 million over the next five years. The bill was introduced by Mr. Riggs and was ordered reported by the Education and Workforce Committee by a vote of 20-18.

Views (on the overall bill):

Republican Leadership: Supports

Chairman Goodling: Supports

Clinton Administration: No Position Available

Amendments: At press time, the *Legislative Digest* was aware of the following amendments to H.R. 1853:

Mr. Goodling may offer an amendment (#1) in the nature of a substitute to maintain current law regarding the method by which states distribute funds to secondary education agencies in FY 1998 (i.e., 70 percent based on distribution of Title I funds from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 20 percent based on the distribution of funds from the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act, and 10 percent based on population). In FYs 1999 and 2000, the funding will be distributed based 70 percent on poverty and 30 percent on population. In FY 2001, the funding will be distributed based 65 percent on poverty and 45 percent on population. Finally, in FY 2002, the funding will be distributed based 60 percent on poverty and 40 percent on population. The bill modifies the method by which states distribute funds to secondary programs by requiring states to distribute funds to secondary programs based 50 percent on the proportion of population that is age 15 to 19, and 50 percent on the population in the same age range that lives in poverty.

The amendment also (1) raises the minimum grant for a secondary agency from \$7,500 to \$10,000, and from \$20,000 to \$35,000 for postsecondary programs; (2) strikes the provision in the bill that allows states to reserve five percent of their allotment for incentive grants; (3) decreases the amount a state is allowed to reserve for rural areas from 10 percent to five percent; (4) allows states to reserve five percent of their allotment for urban areas; (5) requires states that qualify to use an alternative secondary distribution formula to target higher areas of poverty; (6) prohibits funds authorized for state grants to be used for national programs; (7) raises the minimum grant award a small state must receive for tech-prep from \$200,000 to \$250,000; (8) increases parental involvement in vocational education programs; (9) requires states to describe how local school boards will participate in developing state vocational education performance standards; (10) requires state performance assessments to include vocational proficiencies; and (11) allows states to provide professional development programs to non-profit private schools with secondary vocational education programs. **Staff Contact:** *Becky Rogers-Voslow, x5-6558*

Mr. Kennedy (MA) may offer an amendment (#2) to allow local education agencies to use grant money for a workforce development coordinator who works with local businesses to develop vocational education curriculum. **Contact:** *x5-5111*

Mr. Klink may offer one of two amendments (#3 or #4) to require states to make accountability reports, which must be submitted to the Education Secretary, available to the public. **Staff Contact:** *Peter Madaus, x5-2565*

Ms. Mink or Ms. Morella may offer an amendment (#5) to require states that currently fund (1) programs for homemakers, single parents, and pregnant women, as well as programs that promote

gender equity, to continue to fund the programs at the same level as in FY 1997. The amendment also restores the requirement that each state designate a gender equity coordinator. The bill currently strikes provisions requiring a gender equity coordinator and repeals the 10.5 percent set aside for (1) programs for homemakers, single parents, and pregnant women, and (2) programs that promote gender equity. **Staff Contact:** *Laura Efurd (Mink), x5-4906; Sandy Zimmet (Morella), x5-5341.*

Additional Information: See *Legislative Digest*, Vol. XXVI, #20, July 11, 1997.



H.R. 2160—FY 1998 Agriculture Appropriations Act

Floor Situation: The House is scheduled to continue consideration H.R. 2160 after it completes consideration of H.R. 1853. Yesterday, the House completed general debate and will now begin considering amendments under the five-minute rule, which provides five minutes to a proponent, five minutes to an opponent, and five minutes to any member who rises to strike the last word. Appropriations bills are privileged and may be considered any time three days after they are filed; they do not require a rule for consideration.

Summary: H.R. 2160 appropriates \$49.6 billion in new FY 1998 budget authority for agriculture programs, \$4.3 billion less than FY 1997 and \$2.7 billion less than the president's request. When scorekeeping adjustments are taken into account, the bill provides \$35.8 billion for mandatory programs (almost 80 percent of the total) and \$13.7 billion for discretionary programs.

Much of the mandatory spending goes toward (1) food stamps (\$25.1 billion), (2) restoring the borrowing authority of the Commodity Credit Corporation (\$783.5 million), (3) child nutrition programs (\$7.8 billion), (4) the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (\$1.6 billion), as well as (5) \$1.1 billion for the Food for Peace (*P.L. 480*) program. Funding for the supplemental nutrition program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is \$3.9 billion, \$118 million more than last year. In addition, the bill limits spending on the Export Enhancement Program to \$205 million.

Regarding discretionary accounts, the bill appropriates \$73.6 million more than last year for cooperative state research and extension programs, \$24 million more for the Rural Housing Service, and \$29 million more for the Food Safety and Inspection Service. In contrast, it provides \$43.9 million less for the Farm Service Agency. A CBO cost estimate was unavailable at press time. The bill was submitted by Mr. Skeen; the Appropriations Committee ordered the bill reported by voice vote on July 9, 1997.

Views (on the overall bill):

Republican Leadership: Supports

Chairman Livingston (Full): Supports

Chairman Skeen (Sub): Supports

Clinton Administration: No Position Available

Amendments: At press time, the *Legislative Digest* was aware of the following amendments to H.R. 2160:

Messrs. Chabot, Schumer, Royce, and Bass may offer an amendment to prohibit funds from being used for the Commodity Credit Corporation's market access program (MAP), enacted as part of the 1978 Agricultural Trade Act. MAP is a mandatory program that does not require an annual appropriation. The 1996 Farm Bill authorized \$90 million for the program. MAP funds market development and promotion efforts, on a cost-sharing basis, for nonprofit agricultural trade organizations, state and regional trade groups, and private companies. *Staff Contact: Tony Condia (Chabot), x5-2216; Kate Scheeler (Schumer), x5-6616*

Ms. Clayton may offer an amendment (#12) to increase funding for the food stamp program by \$2.5 billion (the bill's current level is \$25.1 billion, \$2.5 billion less than FY 1997) and reduce each other appropriation in the bill by five percent. *Staff Contact: Francesca Fierro, x5-3101*

Ms. Clayton may offer an amendment (#13) to increase funding for the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) supplemental nutrition program by \$184 million to equal to the president's request (the bill's current level is \$3.9 billion, \$118 million more than FY 1997) and reduce each other appropriation in the bill by 0.37 percent. *Staff Contact: Francesca Fierro, x5-3101*

Mr. Cox may offer an amendment (#1) to prohibit the use of U.S. funds (from the P.L. 480 Food for Peace program) to deliver food aid to North Korea. *Staff Contact: Mark Lagon, x6-0678*

* **Mr. Hall (OH)** may offer a secondary amendment to the Cox amendment to ensure that famine relief provided by the World Food Program and other private organizations may still be provided to North Korea. *Staff Contact: Kim Miller, x5-6465*

Ms. Furse may offer an amendment to reduce funding for Animal Damage Control programs by \$11.3 million (from the bill's current level of \$28 million to \$16.7 million). Additionally, the amendment limits funding for Animal Damage Control (ADC) livestock protection efforts in the western United States to \$1.9 million. The ADC's western animal control efforts target livestock predators, such as coyotes, foxes, and bears. *Staff Contact: Elise Jones, x5-0855*

Mmes. Lowey, Degette, and Smith (WA) and Messrs. Hansen and Meehan may offer an amendment (#3) to prohibit funds in the bill from being used for tobacco crop insurance or tobacco-related extension services, which is estimated to provide \$34 million in savings. The amendment exempts crop insurance policies already in effect on the date of enactment. Proponents of scaling back tobacco programs argue that the government should not be subsidizing such an unhealthy product, considering recent revelations about tobacco company knowledge of the severe health consequences of their products, when it is subsidizing other programs to specifically curb tobacco use. Opponents of scaling back the tobacco program point out that there is little, if any link between programs that assist farmers and a consumer's choice to smoke, and that there is a need for even tobacco farmers to receive assistance to insure against natural disasters and encourage environmentally sound cropping practices (as typically offered for other commodities). *Contact: (Lowey), x5-6506; (Degette), x5-4431*

Mr. Meehan and Mr. Hansen may offer an amendment (#4) to increase funding for the FDA's tobacco initiatives by \$14 million and offset the increase by reducing funding for the federal crop

insurance corporation's (FCIC) sales commissions by an equal amount. The bill currently provides \$188.6 million for sales commissions (\$36 million more than the president's request) to private insurance companies participating in the FCIC program, which reimburses private companies for expenses associated with selling and servicing crop insurance policies. **Staff Contact:** *Bill McCann (Meehan), x5-3411*

Mr. Miller (FL) and Mr. Schumer may offer an amendment to prohibit funds in the bill from being used to carry out the "non-recourse" loan portion of the sugar program. The amendment leaves intact the "recourse" loan program for processors, as well as the sugar tariff rate quota. "Recourse" means processors are obligated to repay the loan with interest in cash, rather than exercise the legal right (under "non-recourse" policy) to hand over sugar offered as collateral in full payment of the loan. Proponents of the amendment argue that recipients (processors, not farmers) of "non-recourse" loans receive the loans at below market rates—making taxpayers bear all the risk—yet still force sugar prices on consumers at almost twice the cost of the world market. Opponents of the amendment counter that reducing the subsidy will increase financial uncertainty for sugar farmers and thus continue to erode their "safety net." In addition, it will devastate an efficient sugar industry by driving producers out of business and wreak havoc on consumers and industrial users who rely on timely shipments of sugar. **Staff Contact:** *Stephanie Elrad (Miller), x5-5015; Kate Scheeler (Schumer), x5-6616*

Mr. Neumann and Mr. Kanjorski may offer an amendment (#5) to establish a maximum market price for peanut sales of \$550 per ton. The 1996 Farm Bill established a maximum market price for peanuts of \$610 per ton. Supporters contend that peanut prices are artificially inflated, at the expense of consumers, and that even with a reduction, the market price of \$550 per ton is still \$200 per ton higher than the world market price. However, opponents counter that changes made by the 1996 Farm Bill reduced the quota support level by 10 percent and argue that the 1996-enacted provisions should be given an opportunity to work. **Staff Contact:** *Scott Heins (Neumann), x5-3031; Alan Pentz (Kanjorski), x5-6511*

Mr. Sanders may offer an amendment (#6) to increase funding for the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program by \$3.7 million and reduce the appropriation for the Market Access Program (currently funded at \$90 million) by an equal amount. SARE provides grants to farmers and ranchers, local cooperative extension services, and research institutions to promote economically viable, environmentally sound agricultural practices. **Staff Contact:** *Eric Olson, x5-4115*

Mr. Sanders may offer an amendment to increase funding for the Meals on Wheels program by \$10 million and offset the increase by reducing funding for the export enhancement program by \$18 million. **Staff Contact:** *Steve Bressler, x5-4115*

Mr. Schumer may offer an amendment to prohibit the Commodity Credit Corporation's Market Access Program (MAP) from issuing a marketing assistance loan to any person who has an annual adjusted gross income of \$100,000 or more from non-farm sources. **Staff Contact:** *Kate Scheeler, x5-6616*

Mr. Smith (MI) may offer an amendment to prohibit funds in the bill from being used to pay the salaries and expenses of personnel employed at, or for providing support services to, any National Resources Conservation Service regional office. **Contact:** *x5-6276*

Mr. Stenholm and Mr. Dooley may offer an amendment (#2 or #9) to strike the limitation on the use of funds for the positions of Deputy and Assistant Deputy Administrator within the Farm Service Agency. *Staff Contact: John Riley (Stenholm), x5-0317*

Mr. Stenholm may offer an amendment to strike a requirement in current law that the Pecan Genetics Research Laboratory be transferred to Texas A & M University from its current location in Brownwood, Texas. *Staff Contact: John Riley, x5-0317*

Mr. Wynn may offer one of four amendments (#10, #11, #15, or #16) to increase funding for civil rights enforcement through the USDA's departmental administration account by \$1.5 million and reduce spending for the Market Access Program by an equal amount. *Staff Contact: Claudia Arko, x5-8699*

Additional Information: See *Legislative Digest*, Vol. XXVI, #20, Pt. II, July 14, 1997.



PLEASE NOTE: UNDER AN OPEN RULE, MEMBERS MAY OFFER ENTIRELY NEW AMENDMENTS TO A BILL AT ANY TIME, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THEY HAVE BEEN PRE-PRINTED IN THE *CONGRESSIONAL RECORD*.

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